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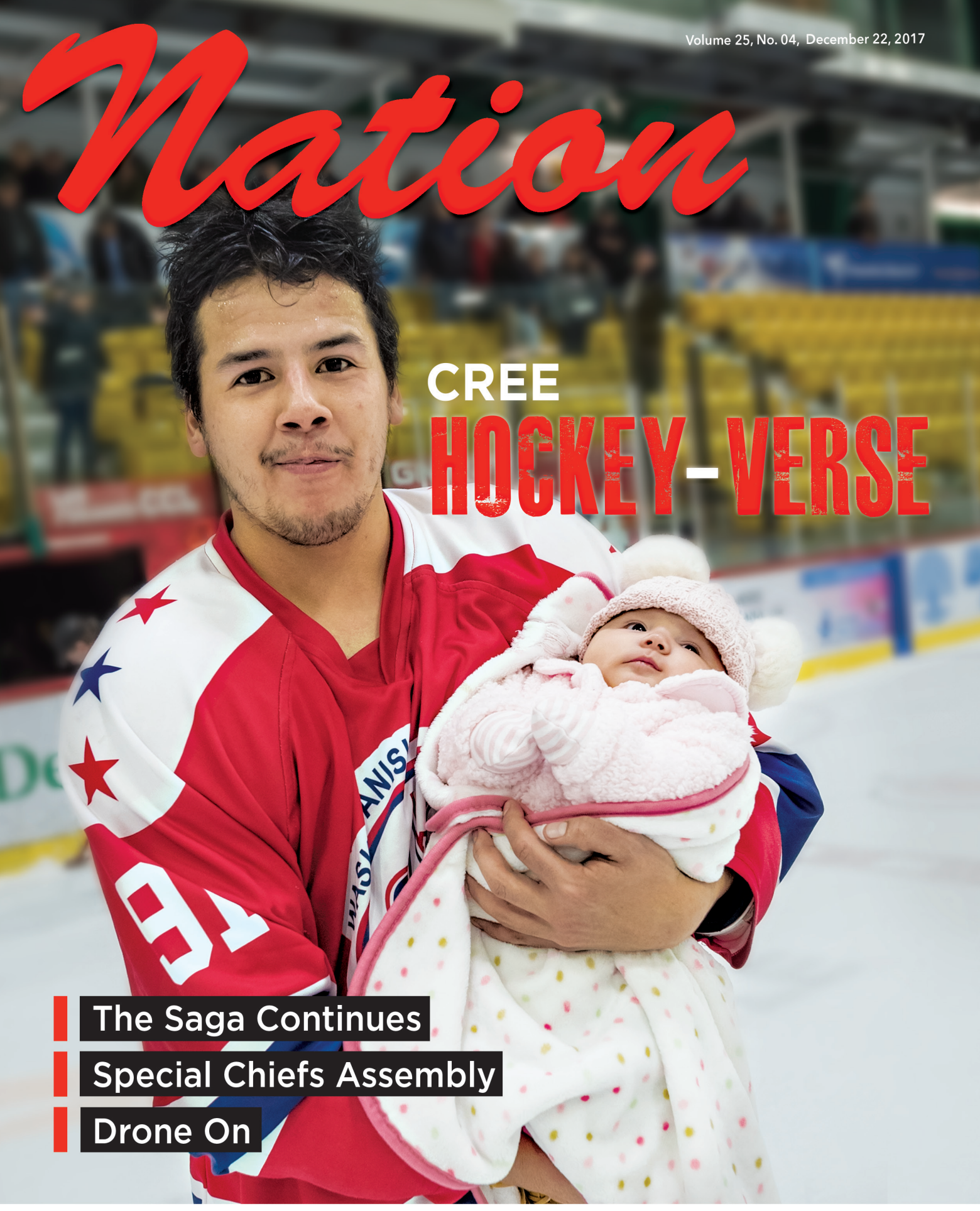

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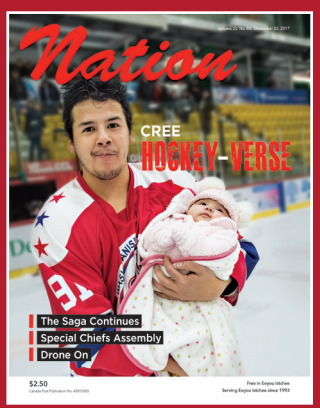

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Editorial

The Identity Olympics

by Dan Isaac

I remember reading the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2012 – I was applying for an international internship I didn't get with the UN. No hard feelings, it probably went to someone infinitely more worthy.

But I read all of the articles in the UNDRIP, and since the announcement that the federal government would back bill C-262 – calling for Canadian law to be in harmony with UNDRIP – I've been thinking of a couple. Articles 6 and 9 to be more specific:

Article 6

Every indigenous individual has the right to a nationality.

Article 9

Indigenous peoples and individuals have the right to belong to an indigenous community or nation, in accordance with the traditions and customs of the community or nation concerned. No discrimination of any kind may arise from the exercise of such a right.

Growing up in Ottawa, you get accustomed to the energy generated by a federal election. The colourful plastic signs in everyone's front yard, the palpable discomfort of opposing political views trying to be civil in public spaces. All of it is so wonderfully exhausting and it happens but once every four years, like the Olympics.

I remember asking my dad, who's usually pretty amiable, who he would be voting for – I must have been around 8 at the time – and getting back his sternest, most stubborn Mohawk-glare.

"I don't vote in this election," he said after a pause.

"Why?" I asked, innocently.

Because we're Mohawk.

When I told my mom, she reacted differently. "Well, you tell your father the Mi'kmaq participate in Canadian democracy because it's important and if the effing Conservatives get in we're all effed."

I'm paraphrasing, and she didn't say "effing", but the point I'm trying to make is that Indigenous identities can be a minefield. And that's before we were in a time where people have become overly concerned with being politically correct.

Ian Campeau, DJ NDN, formerly of A Tribe Called Red, once said, "Existing while being Indigenous is political" – or words to that effect.

He's not wrong, but on average the federal political career for a Liberal MP is 12 years, seven if you're a Conservative, and less than four for an NDP MP. My political career of existing while being Indigenous is coming up on 30 years. No wonder I'm so tired and Campeau quit the band.

While I accept my political responsibilities as an Indigenous individual I think it'd be nice to vote in a Canadian election without feeling like I'm compromising the sovereignty of my people, or rooting for Team Canada in the Olympics without feeling like I'm cheering for my oppressor.

I don't need it every day, but every once in a while it'd be nice not having an identity in conflict with itself… like, once every four years.

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Ouje-Bougoumou Cree Nation

Greetings from the People of Ouje-Bougoumou

On behalf of the entire community of Ouje-Bougoumou we would like to extend our best wishes to all our friends throughout Eeyou Istchee and beyond for a **Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year!**

May this holiday season bring us all together in our families and in our communities to share in the simple pleasures of life and may we experience the deep joy and the blessings of our being together. May we also be aware of how much we have to be grateful for, and let us always keep in mind, and reach out to, those who may be less fortunate. And may we all reflect on the meaning of this special holiday season and express it in our lives throughout the year.

Chief Curtis Bosum

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News

On the precipice

Romeo Saganash's bill will see UN Indigenous Rights Declaration become Canadian law

Photos & Story by Ben Powless

It was over 30 years ago that a young Romeo Saganash first attended negotiations at the United Nations in New York City to help push Indigenous rights to the level of international law.

Saganash now stands ready to see his private member's bill adopted by Parliament, thereby incorporating the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) into Canadian law.

Speaking to the House of Commons, Saganash addressed his life's work that brought him to that moment, as a residential school survivor who was "incarcerated culturally, politically, linguistically, spiritually even."

When he got out of residential school, he had two goals. The first was to reconnect with the land and live off the land, which he did right after getting out. The second was to reconcile "with the people who had put me away for 10 years."

Bill C-262, he says, is his attempt at reconciliation.

Saganash was born in Waswanipi, and first went to the UN in 1984. A year later he founded the Cree Nation Youth Council, and in 1989 became the first Cree person in Quebec to achieve a law degree. In 2011, he was elected a New Democratic Party Member of Parliament for Abitibi–Baie-James–Nunavik–Eeyou for the first time. He introduced Bill C-262 in April 2016.

At the time, Justin Trudeau's Liberal government opposed the bill.

Famously, Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould, who is herself Indigenous from British Colombia, called UNDRIP "unworkable" within the context of Canadian law.

That all changed in November at an event to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the UN's adoption of the Declaration on December 13, 2007. At the time, only four countries in the world opposed the Declaration, including Canada.

"With the direction and leadership of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, our government will support Bill C-262," Wilson-Raybould said at the event. "The bill acknowledges the application of the UN Declaration in Canada and calls for the alignment of the laws of Canada with the UN Declaration."

Assembly of First Nations National Chief Perry Bellegarde responded, thanking Saganash for his work. "Giving life to the UN Declaration in Canadian law will build a stronger country," Bellegarde commented. "First Nations are looking forward to their opportunity to provide input and comment on the bill as it works its way through the parliamentary process."

In a speech to a Parliament Hill rally December 4, Saganash said that the government only supported it because of widespread pressure from people across the country.

He emphasized that the bill was non-partisan: "It's not about Romeo Saganash or the NDP, it's about Indigenous Peoples' human rights, their fundamental rights. It took 150 years to get here with respect to Indigenous Peoples, it will take 150 years to fix."

A few hours later, he was inside the House of Commons for the first debate on the bill since it was introduced last April.

Saganash reminded MPs that the bill is not about creating new laws or rights; it's simply about recognizing rights that are fundamental, inherent and pre-existent for Indigenous Peoples.

"Bill C-262 is about human rights. Bill C-262 is about justice. Bill C-262 is about reconciliation. If we are true to our commitment to reconciliation, this is the first step in that direction," he declared.

Speaking on behalf of the government, MP Yvonne Jones, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, said the government was proud to support the bill.

"We will do what is long past due in this country, which is to bring forward the right legislation and standards to ensure that self-determination and the inherent rights of Indigenous People are respected in the lands that we all love," said Jones.

Saganash said he expects Parliament to vote on the bill sometime in late February or March.

Eeyou Istchee James Bay
Regional Government

Happy New Year 2018 to all of our citizens of Eeyou Istchee James Bay!

Nous souhaitons une **Bonne Année 2018** à toute la population d'Eeyou Istchee Baie-James!

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Public dialogue

Grand Chief Abel Bosum met with former Prime Minister Paul Martin to discuss the challenges of implementing Cree governance within Eeyou Istchee during a McGill University event November 29.

"It's really about the story, a Cree story," Bosum said, "what the Cree went through in the last 40 years, since they signed the James Bay Northern Quebec Agreement."

The Indigenous Leadership, Development and Governance event was moderated by lawyer John Hurley and took place in Montreal at McGill University's Law Faculty.

Promise made, **promise kept**

Grand Chief Abel Bosum is making a first step fulfil one of his main election promises with the announcement that the Cree Nation Government will create a $100 million housing fund.

The news came at the CNG's Council Board meeting in early December. He said the fund will be pulled from $200 million pledged by the federal government in the Cree Governance Agreement and will focus on home ownership.

"In addition to housing we want to create Cree employment and building contracts," said Bosum. "Leadership is on board, the next step is to agree on how it will look."

In Brief

Photo provided by Édith Cloutier

Cloutier honoured with justice award

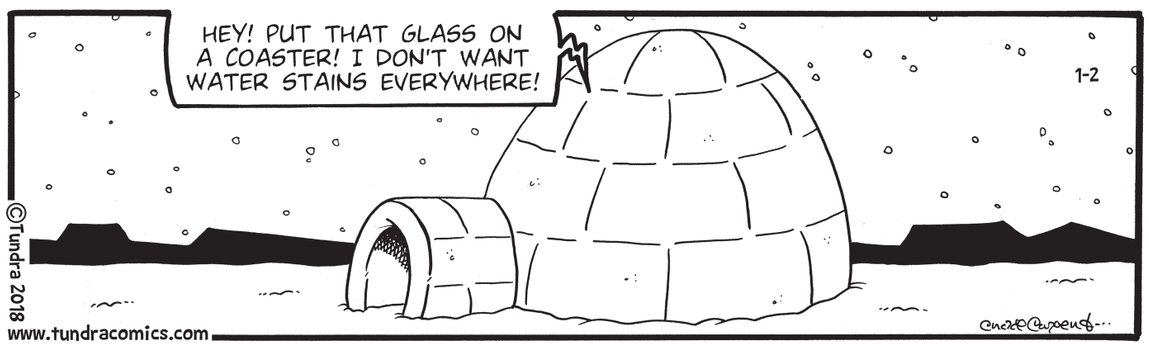
Édith Cloutier, the executive director of the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre for the past 28 years, received the Prix de la Justice du Québec at an awards ceremony in Quebec City December 5. She becomes the 25th recipient of the prestigious prize, which recognizes citizens who have excelled in the promotion of justice in Quebec. She was singled out for her dedication to reconciliation and her leadership during Val-d'Or police abuse scandal, as well as playing a key role in implementing Quebec's public inquiry.

"I am dedicating this award to the Indigenous women of Val-d'Or whose courage paved the way for others to unveil the injustices and violence they suffered, to the people of heart and dedication at the Friendship Centre of Val-d'Or I call family, and with Quebec society as a whole," said Cloutier. "Without the support and kindness from First Nation leadership, social transformation would not be engaged for the First Peoples of Quebec."

Minister, MNA visit Mistissini

Health and Social Services Minister Gaétan Barrette and Ungava MNA Jean Boucher visited the Mistissini Elders' Home and the Mistissini Community Miyupimaatisiiuun Centre December 4. During their visit, the minister and MNA spoke with heads of departments and toured facilities.

"What I saw is very good care provided to Elders," said Barrette. "It was quite interesting to see… the will in this community to take care of their seniors in all situations, and I'm sure that this is something that we can collaborate on with the Cree community."



Photos by Jonathan Levert
of Image Nomade Productions

CENTRE OF THE HOCKEY UNIVERSE

by Dan Coyle

Val-d'Or hosts the **37th Annual CREE Senior Tourney**

Hockey players and fans from across Eeyou Istchee descended on Val-d'Or as the 37th Annual CREE Senior Hockey and Broomball Tournament rolled into town for four days, November 30 to December 3.

The city briefly became the Centre of the First Nations Hockey Universe as thousands of fans made the trip to watch over 1300 players compete for 89 teams across five hockey and three broomball categories at one of Canada's most important First Nations sporting events.

Once again, the Air Creebec Centre hosted the majority of contests, with players also hitting the ice at Senneterre's Centre sportif André-Dubé, and at the Barraute Arena.

The Waskaganish Wings proved to be the dominant force in the Class A Hockey category. With seven of the top eight scorers on their roster at this year's tournament, the Wings powered to a 7-0 victory over the Mistissini Trappers in their first contest of the weekend, en route to a 3-0-0 record in preliminary action and the top seed entering the Class A Hockey playoffs.

The Wings outgunned opponents by an overall margin of 17-3 in their first three outings, but playoff matchups proved to be much tighter affairs. Waskaganish eked out a narrow 2-1 win over the Lac Simon Beavers to earn a berth in the final, where they claimed the championship banner with another 2-1 victory, this time against the Waswanipi Chiefs.

Kelvin Blackned tallied four goals and one assist to join Wings teammate Samuel Henley as the top scorers in Class A Hockey, with five points each. Waskaganish sniper Chris Hester also potted four goals.

With 15 teams participating, Class B1 Hockey emerged as the toughest hockey category at this year's tournament, but the Pikogan Maikan looked to be up to the task in the early going. The Abitibiwinni First Nation squad notched four straight shutouts in preliminary action, including a pair of lopsided 10-0 victories over Oujé-Bougoumou and Eastmain, and looked to be the

clear favourite going into the championship round.

The road quickly got tougher for the Maikan, who opened the playoffs with a slim 4-3 win over the scrappy Inukjuak Blackhawks, and clinched a berth in the final by knocking off the Waskaganish Jets by a 4-1 score. However, Pikogan's early-tournament touch eluded them in the club's championship matchup with Kitigan Zibi KZ Gaz, who capped an undefeated run at this year's event with a stunning 4-2 victory.

Despite filling the net early on, the Maikan failed to produce the top scorer in Class B1 Hockey action. That honour went to Max Lapointe of the Mistissini Chummys, who racked up nine goals and three assists.

Pikogan's Joey Kistabish finished second in Class B1 Hockey with 11 points, while teammate Jordan Kistabish joined Inukjuak's Samson Tookalook with seven points.

Women's Competitive Broomball also featured 15 teams across three divisions, including a trio of Eeyou Istchee squads that finished preliminary action with unblemished 4-0-0 records.

The Waskaganish Starlites got their tournament off to a relatively slow start with a narrow 1-0 win over the Mistissini Glaciers, before marching to a 6-0 victory over the Lac Simon Jaguars on the strength of a Martina Cowboy hat trick.

The Starlites wrapped up their preliminary schedule with shutout wins over the Chisasibi North Stars and Pikogan, and followed up with a 2-0 blanking of the Nemaska Capitals. But the squad quickly hit a wall in its semi-final matchup with

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the Waswanipi Eagles, who quietly made a run to the final four with five straight shutout wins, and bounced the Starlites from championship contention with an impressive 3-1 win.

While the Eagles' offense proved to be far less prolific than the high-flying Starlites, the club clearly iced the stingiest defense at this tournament. Riding high following their win over the Starlites, Waswanipi clinched the Women's Competitive Broomball championship with a razor-thin 1-0 win over the Wemindji IceStars to complete their Cinderella run at this year's event.

Cowboy built on her three-goal performance against the Glaciers to finish the tournament with six goals and two assists, joining Wemindji's Monica Visitor atop the Women's Competitive Broomball player stats with eight points.

Old Timers 40+ Hockey was once again one of the most popular events at this year's tournament. The Chisasibi Relics opened with a decisive 4-1 victory over Waskaganish, kicking off an undefeated drive to the category final, where they again topped Waskaganish with a 1-0 win to claim the Old Timers title.

Nine Relics players picked up points during their championship drive, but just one Chisasibi shooter managed to crack the Top 10 in scoring. Adrian Chiskamish finished the tourney with five goals and one assist, well back of Whapmagoostui's Robert Auclair. The Whalers sniper racked up an impressive nine goals and four assists, but that was not enough to rescue the Whapmagoostui squad, which surrendered a tournament-worst 20 goals during a 1-2-0 run in preliminary action.

Women's Competitive Broomball also featured 15 teams across three divisions, including a trio of Eeyou Istchee squads that finished preliminary action with unblemished 4-0-0 records.

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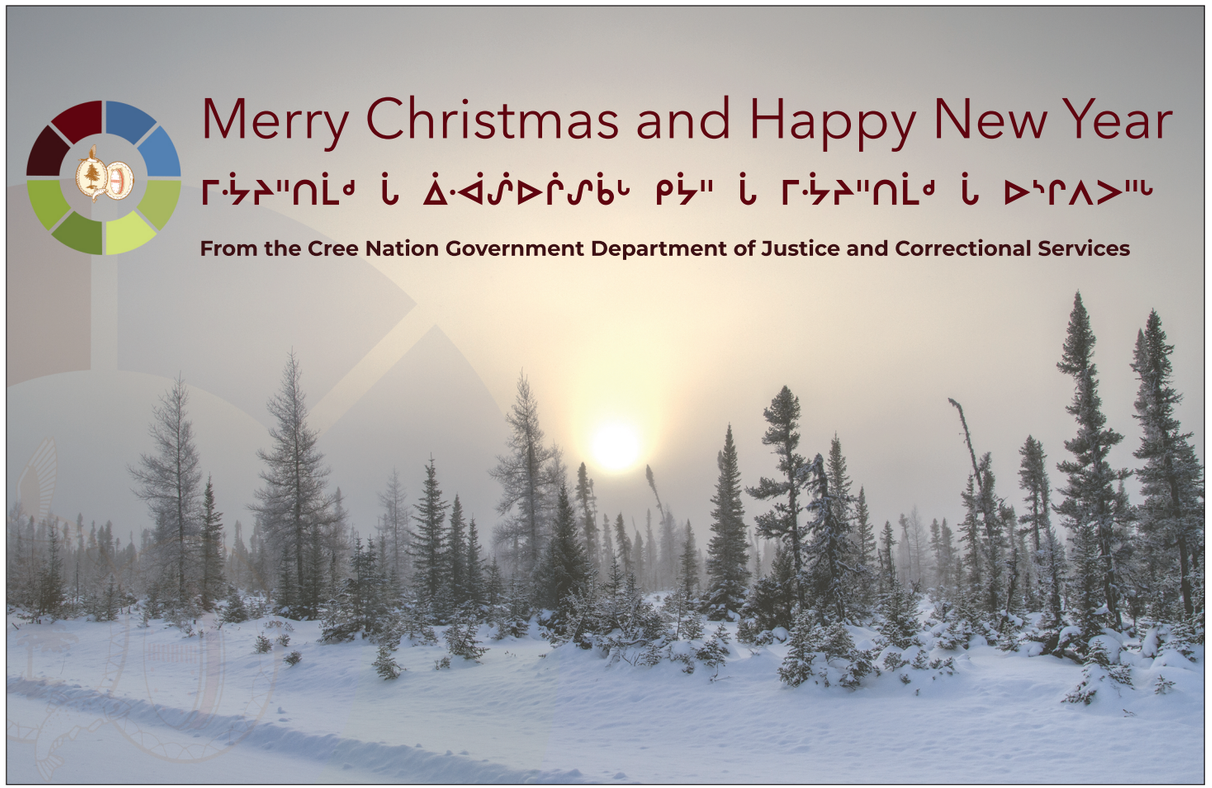
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MMIWG inquiry criticism overshadows education, finance agreements at AFN gathering

Despite a rocky start, chiefs at the annual Assembly of First Nations winter gathering held in Ottawa December 5-7 agreed to move forward on "historic" deals on finance and education with Canada.

"We've made gains, but challenges remain," AFN National Chief Perry Bellegarde told 1200 delegates, warning that much work still needed to be done on education, housing, water and language preservation.

Among the gains, he cited the government's recent decision to fully implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). He also lauded the federal government's pledge to increase First Nations funding to $11.8 billion by 2021.

But the good news was dimmed by harsh criticism of Marion Buller, the chief commissioner of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' inquiry.

Addressing the assembly, Buller said some of the criticism was valid, but argued that much of the good work has been "lost in translation." She listed off a number of accomplishments as she requested support for a two-year extension to the inquiry.

Buller's speech didn't appear to appease the chiefs and family members in attendance. Many excoriated her while family members accused her of disrespecting them.

The most stinging criticism came from Sheila North Wilson, the Grand Chief of Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak.

"You're probably a brilliant human being, but I tell you, you are not a brilliant commissioner for this inquiry," North Wilson said to applause. "I'm actually repulsed you're here."

Delegates adopted a motion to support the two-year extension for the inquiry, but added an amendment calling for Buller to step down. The vote passed 48-15.

Meanwhile, the education deal also faced its share of critics. In negotiation since January,

'Historic' Promises, Controversy

Photos & Story by Ben Powless

the proposal would see a $665 million fund currently reserved for supporting school boards across Canada opened to all First Nations. The ultimate goal is to increase funding for all First Nations through self-government agreements on education.

AFN and government estimates show that the average funding per-student would rise by 30%, bringing the average funding up to $23,000 per student. This would be higher in more remote and northern communities. No community would see a decrease in funding.

A number of speakers forcefully opposed the bill; some suggesting the plan would jeopardize future education funding increases, while others said it didn't go far enough. In the end, delegates gave the AFN a green light to continue negotiations to make the plan official government policy.

Indigenous Services Minister Jane Philpott addressed the chiefs regarding funding initiatives being discussed with the AFN.

She pledged millions of dollars towards First Nations child welfare, which she called a "humanitarian crisis," noting that a recent Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ruling said that more had to be done on this issue by Canada. She promised more money in the 2018 budget.

Philpott said she has learned how many communities have issues with the current financial relationship between the federal government and band councils. She said the government is prepared to move ahead with 10-year block grants to communities, starting in 2019 with "qualified" First Nations.

Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould emphasized the new path that the federal government was embarking on in implementing the UNDRIP and working to recognize self-government and the self-determination of First Nations.

Grand Chief Sheila North Wilson of the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak called for the resignation of MMIWG inquiry's Chief Commissioner Marion Buller

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and defining their vision of government and working to ensure the capacity to make it a reality. No crown or government can lead this work for you."

After both ministers left, a number of chiefs spoke out, decrying the fact that the chiefs heard from the ministers, but the ministers didn't have time to hear from the chiefs.

Organizers seem to have received the message. From then on, all invited guests made sure to include time for questions and comments from the chiefs.

Also on the table was the federal plan to legalize cannabis. Many chiefs asked the government to delay the implementation date by a year, arguing they weren't prepared.

However, chiefs were overwhelmingly agreed that they alone should have the jurisdiction over whether to allow its sales in their communities.

AANISCHAAUKAMIKW

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Photograph from the Library and Archives of Canada (Murie J. Olaus Collection: 1977-253)
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May the joy of the holiday season fill your homes and hearts.
The Niskamoon Board of Directors and Staff wish all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

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Commission scolaire crie

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To all of our students and their parents, our employees and community partners in education...
We send you our warmest wishes for a safe and happy holiday season!
We look forward to another rewarding year of partnership in education.
From all of us at the Cree School Board

À tous nos étudiants et à leurs parents, à nos employés et nos partenaires en éducation...
Nous vous transmettons nos meilleurs vœux pour un joyeux temps des Fêtes !
Nous avons hâte à une autre année enrichissante de partenariat en éducation.
De nous tous à la Commission scolaire crie

Kathleen J. Wootton
Chairperson and Council of Commissioners

Abraham Jolly
Director General and Senior Management

FLY BUYS

Drone Delivery Canada successfully completes test flights from Moosonee to Moose Factory

by Joshua Grant

Photos provided by Greg Colacitti

Once thought of as a pie-in-the-sky scenario, we may literally soon be seeing pies in the sky.

After being granted permission by Transport Canada to conduct Canada's first commercial tests, Drone Delivery Canada (DDC) of Vaughn, Ontario, completed several successful trial flights between the communities of Moosonee and Moose Factory on November 16.

DDC drones achieved a 100% success rate, despite dealing with snow, strong winds and freezing temperatures. Drone Delivery Canada's CEO Tony Di Benedetto believes that this is only the beginning, and hopes to bring his company's services to Canada's remote communities who he thinks stand to benefit from it the most.

Cree Nation of Mistissini

Happy New Year

Wishing you a new year rich with the blessings of love, joy, warmth, and laughter. Happy New Year to everyone in Eeyou Istchee!

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From Chief and Council.

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Wishing You & Yours a Safe & Happy Holiday Season

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"The biggest drone we're looking at can carry approximately ***3000 pounds***

The goal is to establish a drone delivery service that would bring food, medical supplies and other necessities to the island of Moose Factory, where access is severely limited during spring breakup and in the fall until the ice is thick enough to drive across.

"When we looked at this technology and these communities and the struggles that they face, we thought that this would be a great fit," said Di Benedetto. "And the more we started engaging with them and understanding their culture and way of life it became very evident to us that it's a perfect fit. It's not about trying to create a gimmick or create hype – these people have a real problem."

Di Benedetto sees unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) as an infrastructure solution. A way for communities that rely on boats, airplanes, helicopters and ice roads to cut down their costs and increase their accessibility to goods and medical supplies. He says the company was founded in 2014 to build a drone delivery platform that could be utilized within Canadian geography – specifically to service northern communities.

"If we can simplify the way that they can transport and access goods I think we can reduce costs, increase quality of life, bring a high-tech industry to their area and pool human capital that is being under-utilized," he explained. "We're looking to create partnerships with the local communities. We build the platform and bring the technology, but you still need [local] people to make this all happen."

The company has developed an advanced telecommunications system to operate and manage their fleet remotely. It spent the last three years working with Canadian regulators and engineers to understand how to allow a drone to safely carry cargo.

Di Benedetto stressed the importance of compliance and collaboration with Transport Canada every step of the way. He noted that while public safety is the primary concern, the technology has huge potential.

"There's a lot of red tape and lot of bureaucracy to this but at the end of the day, it's all about safety," he said. "The starting point today is 10 pounds – we're taking baby steps. Over time we'll slowly start increasing [the payload]. The biggest drone we're looking at can carry approximately 3000 pounds – they're bigger units and they can carry some serious weight."

To be clear, commercial UAVs can't fly wherever they want. Even though DDC's planes don't have any pilots, the drones will travel along existing flight paths and be strictly regulated by Transport Canada.

"To date we've obtained a multiple flight testing certificates and we're moving forward to obtain our compliance status operator certificate," said Di Benedetto. "With that we'll become a federally regulated entity, and we'll have to adhere to the same safety and quality standards as any other airline."

Ultimately, Drone Delivery Canada's goal is to see their service put both Canada and its remote First Nations at the forefront of a cutting-edge industry.

"Our goal is a national rollout and we have a lot of interest from outside of Canada as well," said Di Benedetto. "Around the world people are facing the same problems, and with this type of technology we're putting Canada on the map as a global leader. We see this as an infrastructure solution for Canada's north."

CREE SCHOOL BOARD
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The whole team at the Cree School Board Post-Secondary Student Services extend their wishes to everyone this holiday season.

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and
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Cree Human Resources Development (CHRD) is a department of Cree Nation Government

The heart of the deal

Business Exchange Day allows Cree businesses to speed date with others

by Nick Wapachee | Photos provided by Cree Human Resources Development

Organized by the Secretariat to the Cree Nation Abitibi-Témiscamingue Economic Alliance, the Business Exchange Day is an event at which entrepreneurs schedule matchmaking meetings with other businesses. This year's exchange was held in Val-d'Or November 29.

"The event places a high value on the principle of mutual respect, good business relationships and understanding the context of northern Quebec," explained Chantal Hamelin, director of operations for the Secretariat.

Over 200 businesses attended this year from Eeyou Istchee, the Abitibi-Témiscamingue region and from Ontario.

More than 700 business matchmaking meetings took place. Each provided participants a chance to establish contact and to create mutually beneficial relationships.

"The importance of the role played by the Secretariat in respectful integration of entrepreneurs' eagerness to widen their horizons is paramount to healthy growth for both businesses that want to work with them and the entrepreneurs," said Hamelin.

Alfred Loon, the treasurer for the Secretariat, said the event offers the opportunity for businesses in the Abitibi and Cree Nation to dialogue with one another in order to work with them more effectively.

Ted Moses, president of the Secretariat, said that the event has positive effects on the communities and businesses, many of which are able to create new partnerships.

Moses pointed out that the mining industry is growing in Eeyou Istchee. "People have to understand that there is an evolution of the skills required in this industry," he underlined. "The Cree Nation is working on improving this, so it looks very positive."

Jacquelin Petit, of Groupe Sogitex and Équipement Rivard, was pleased to take part in the event. "[It] helped us understand the mechanism of the relationship with the Cree Nation and its expectations of us," he explained.

Former Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come said that building relationships among the participants is a crucial step before building business partnerships.

The Secretariat's next economic development event will be held in Val-d'Or June 13-14, 2018.

More than 700 business
matchmaking meetings took place

EVOQ ARCHITECTURE

We wish you success and great achievements for the year 2018.
Happy Holidays!

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HARDY RINGUETTE

Wishing everyone in Eeyou Istchee a Merry Christmas & Happy Season's Greetings

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Souped-up sledding

by Sonny Orr

Rez Notes

I love winter. It's a great time to be outside and enjoy life, frozen and white. It's a time that many might think it's better to be inside, but what's better than riding the open tundra or in a tight forest on a high-powered sled? Riding around again and again, that's what. Yes, although Christmas is the main highlight of the season and New Year's Eve deserves a nod, it's really the season for outdoor fun and memorable experiences.

One of my experiences that might trigger a few of your own was just the cool riding around at night – all night. Gas was 25¢ a gallon and warm hats were optional. For some, frozen ears were status symbols and getting stuck was unheard of. The sleds in those days could be easily lifted and tossed onto better footing and were rather slow but steady. The choke was an essential piece of our mechanical vocabulary and the know-how to clean a spark plug was the difference between life and death.

Bogie wheels? Well, they were handled by the local mechanic, who often had to do a lot of machine work and create a lot of sparks all over the place in the process. Sew a mangled track back together? No choice. After a few years, the original mechanism was barely recognizable, covered with snare wire, nails, odd screws and makeshift parts. Heck, I knew a guy who carved his ski out of a tree to get back home, nothing like the good old bush fix.

Over the years and the latest generation of machines rolls out for your winter enjoyment, it takes careful review of all the details and options online to put together a sled that you want. Amazingly, the essential pull starter cord is an option. Back in the day, the electric ignition was an expensive option. Oil was an important ingredient, measured out in quarts and applied to gasoline. Without oil, the engine would melt and seize.

That's what winter is for. It's for whizzing by skiers and other healthy people at 130 klicks per hour, leaving everyone in your snow haze

Today, with the ultra-quiet four stroke, Bluetooth-connected helmets and the ability to ride small avalanches or cause large ones, it's like riding Darth Vadar's snowmobile. It's so cool. Don't get me wrong, I still cherish those historic sleds, but what I miss the most is the price tag. An SS-rated sled could set you back 3500 big ones and roar past everyone in any trail challenge. But today, if you aren't a sultan, you might as well mortgage the kids, even if you don't have any. My online sled choice was nearly the price of a two-year-old Chrysler 300, if you get my drift.

So, I try to get a simple machine and the only one that seems to grab my attention online is a dinky little Yamaha or stripped-down basic sport model. Then, I think when my old two-stroke was fired up from underneath tons of snow drifts and shoddily kept outdoors all year. It started right away. After a few hours of digging and melting the rest of the snow and ice around the frozen chassis and innards, we tossed it onto fresh snow and my happy stepson takes off to go hunting.

Tough machines are hard to find these days. It's a classic 377 Safari, boned down and all black. I like to call my sled the Black Mamba, but it sounds more like a black jaguar and runs like a black magic charm. It has little floater fins on the front, for those extra-deep, soft snow conditions and is light enough not to cause heart attacks in case you do get stuck. Nothing like a sled that starts right away.

Now, with Christmas nearing and the need for speed grabbing you in the ornaments, put on your helmet and ride with the wind tugging your head back on your one-litre machine! That's what winter is for. It's for whizzing by skiers and other healthy people at 130 klicks per hour, leaving everyone in your snow haze. And by the way everyone, Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas! BBBrraaappp!

May this special time of the year, shared with your family and friends, bring you joy and happiness. It is with all my heart that I wish you **happy holidays and best wishes for the year 2018!**

ENSEMBLE on fait avancer le Québec | **Geoffrey Kelley,** Minister Responsible for Aboriginal Affairs

Québec

Making good **career decisions**

by Xavier Kataquapit

The world is changing rapidly for all of us. First Nations across the country are dealing with development on their traditional lands that can be overwhelming. New technologies and the arrival of worldwide communications, like the internet, have changed all our lives. Much of this has happened in the past 20 years.

A few decades ago I did not hear of many First Nation people heading off to university or college. These days many of my family members and friends and their children are getting post-secondary education. They are taking programs in medicine, education, business, construction and the arts.

I always suggest that young people learn as much as they can about the profession or trade they are thinking about before deciding on their career path. The best way is to talk to someone working in an area you are considering. Talk to a doctor, nurse, teacher, mechanic, heavy machinery operator, writer, artist or filmmaker and get a realistic view on that particular career. By talking directly to them, you will gain insight into the profession, how much work is involved in terms of education and lifestyle, and how much money you can make.

As a writer, photographer and video producer I can tell you that if you are considering this career path you will achieve a lot of satisfaction, but you must really value telling stories and hopefully in a way that contributes to a more positive world. As a First Nation writer and photographer I have always been proud and felt fortunate to bring my background as an Aboriginal to tell the stories of my people in an uplifting and informative way. I do my best to bring the Aboriginal perspective to all kind of issues and at all levels. That is all very satisfying, however, this is a profession in which the monetary rewards are not great so you have to really love what you are doing.

If you choose to go into any of the arts, you must be prepared to struggle often to make a living and to try to be as true as possible to your art. I have been very fortunate that I have had the support of First Nation organizations and communities as well as Native and non-Native media over the years and I say meegwetch to all of them. I also understand that I have been a positive influence with the First Nations I have worked with over the years and assisted in providing them and their employees as well as members with a far-reaching sphere of influence. If you're considering getting involved in the arts, you have to know that your work is important and has value.

Too often artists – like writers, photographers, videographers – are treated as though their work should be donated more or less and does not have real value. If you become involved in any arts production you should know that when you produce a work for a specific project then you should be paid fairly for your expertise and efforts. I have run into situations over the years where I have met people who believe that they can write as well as any experienced writer, take photographs like any professional photographer and produce artwork better than dedicated artists. That is just not true.

I have met people who want to take my work from a specific project and repurpose it. This is not allowed and is very unfair. I have allowed some of this to happen at times over the years, but only if the request is made to me and involves an article or a couple of photos or clips. The way this works on a professional level is that when you produce writing, photography or video for a specific project then that's where the use ends. A client cannot take or ask for your work to use for any other purpose without asking you and you must decide on what you want to allow them to have and at what price. As an artist you should understand your rights. Artists are not second-class citizens who have no value or rights. Never let yourself be bullied by anyone who wants to use your work without thinking about you. That is not how it works.

We would like to wish everyone a safe and **happy holidays!**

From the Cree Nation of Chisasibi

CREE NATION OF CHISASIBI

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Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)
Grand Conseil des Cris (Eeyou Istchee)

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Cree Nation Government
Gouvernement de la Nation Crie

A Message of Gratitude in the Midst of Grief

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At this time, as we approach the Christmas season, our thoughts and our hearts go out to the families of Waskaganish who so sadly will be missing husbands, fathers, grandfathers, sons, brothers, uncles and friends. The personal losses are unimaginable and the entire Cree Nation continues to grieve with Waskaganish.

At the same time, we have seen an enormous outpouring of sympathy as well as more tangible expressions of support from the many volunteers from our Cree communities, from our brothers and sisters in Ontario, from rescue units in Quebec and throughout Canada. We remain forever grateful for these displays of meaningful support which leave us all feeling not quite so alone and leave us knowing that when it matters we are all there for one another. This is the small gift in an enormous tragedy.

The Chief and Council of Waskaganish have been exemplary in the way they have managed the search-and-rescue efforts and in the way they have made their response a Council and a community priority. In the midst of the sadness and the grief, I feel pride in the way we have all come together to support the families of Waskaganish. It has confirmed for me that we are really all one family, and that is comforting to know. May we always continue to be so.

ᐅ ᐋᑎ ᐅᑎᐢᑭᐱᐠᓴ, ᐊᑎ ᐠᑦᐦᐱᐢᑎᑎᐢᐞ ᒥᓄ ᖃ ᒪᔪᓂᑭᑲᓴ, ᐊᐠᑭᐠᑭᑐᐧᐊᓂᐅᐠ ᑭᐠᑦᐢᐃᓭᐢ ᐊᓂᑭ ᐅᑐᐃᒪᐅᓴ ᐊᓂᑦ ᐧᐊᔫᑲᐢᐃᓭᐢ ᐃ ᒥᐢᑎᐢᐃᓭᐢ, ᐅᒧᓇᒥᐧᐊᓭᐢ, ᐅᔪᔪᒥᐧᐊᓭᐢ, ᐧᐃᑭᐃᓱᐧᐊᓭᐢ, ᐅᐢᔪᒥᐧᐊᓭᐢ ᑭᐠ ᒥ ᐧᐃᐣᐧᐊᓭᐢ, ᐅᐢᔪᒥᐧᐊᓭᐢ ᐊᓂᑦᑎᐢᐃᓭᐢ ᐊᓂᑦ

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MEILLEURS VOEUX
pour Noël et
la Nouvelle Année!

THANK YOU
for flying Air Creebec
BEST WISHES
to you and your family
this Christmas and
in the New Year

ᒋ ᓇᓴᐺᒥᑎᓂᓇᓄ
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